

they are consulted, and whether the union can give a sense of responsibility towards, for example, the "development of Socialism."

The answers are clear. They are summed up in the one word—apathy. Only a small minority attend branch meetings, elections are meaningless; paid officials are given policy-making functions by election; a minority using block votes can sway great issues; and the executive at every level is unrepresentative because of lack of interest by the rank and file. Among the reasons for this lack of interest in union affairs or non-attendance at meetings are—home ties, dancing, the cinema, timidity (especially among women members) and a desire to forget the factory and everything connected with it.

The reader should not be put off by the un-English sociological jargon, the statistical discussions, and all the paraphernalia of a research project, or even the naïveté of the author. For this book poses a central question: how can the democratic base of the trade unions be fortified to prevent the trade unions from becoming an arm of the state?

—W.B.S.

HOMES AND NEWSPAPERS

THE JOURNALIST'S LONDON, by Philip Gibbs; *LONDON HOMES*, by Ralph Dutton. Both published in *The Londoner's Library*, by Allan Wingate. English price, 15s.

NOW in the seventies, Philip Gibbs, who contributes to this admirable series of specialised books on London, is an old friend. He lives in newspaper history by, among other things, his courage in doubting whether Dr. Frederick Cook had reached the North Pole, and in the fiction of journalism by that minor classic, *The Street of Adventure*. Here he covers the whole history of London journalism, but the greater part is about what he himself has known so well in 50 years. As one would expect, the book is rich in human interest, crowded with reminiscences and pen portraits of journalists and public men, and throwing light on political history. There have been changes, not only in newspapers, but in the men who make them. Philip Gibbs says he has no personal quarrel with the "Press lords," but clearly prefers the old-time editor who "was pleased to take his evening meal at his own desk brought in from a near-by tavern," a man with a pride of his own "beyond that of princes." I recommend this to all who like the smell of printer's ink.

A study of the housing of London's well-to-do through three centuries has a much narrower interest, but Ralph Dutton makes the most of it. Domestic architecture is linked with life. Here are details, the result of much research, of the stately town houses of the gentry

BIOGRAPHY and autobiography are the main themes in *ZB Book Review* for May 10. "Selection from Thomas Wolfe" (selected by Maxwell Geismar) is to be reviewed by Professor J. C. Garrett. Professor R. S. Parker is to discuss "Harold Laski," by Kingsley Martin (left), Professor G. A. F. Knight will speak about Victor Gollancz's "My Dear



Timothy," and Pat Lawlor will review "The House of Collins," by David Keir.

and the middle-class homes that multiplied in Victorian times. The 18th Century was a flowering period. A falling off in architecture and furnishings set in about 1830, roughly coincident with the death of that somewhat cultivated reprobate George IV. In the Victorian era wealth accumulated and sanitation and morals improved, but taste declined. Students of architecture and social history especially will enjoy this book. The illustrations to both books are numerous and well chosen.

—A.M.

ELEPHANTS OVER THE BORDER

NO STONE UNTURNED, by Ian Hamilton; *Victor Gollancz*. English price, 12 6.

THIS is the inside story of the reiving of the Stone of Destiny from Westminster Abbey on Christmas morning, 1950, as told by the ringleader of the young Scottish Nationalists (three youths and a girl) who carried out the coup. Sir Compton Mackenzie, who traces the origins of the affair in an enthusiastic foreword (he gets as far back as the 8th Century) defies the reader not to be carried away by the sheer excitement of the narrative. This is a slight overstatement. The story is mildly exciting in parts, but what is most likely to impress the reader is the narrator's portentous and comical solemnity. Only through Divine intervention at one or two critical moments, he believes, was their adventure crowned with success. If the old saying is true, and a special Providence looks after fools and bairns, perhaps he is right. Of course, it is difficult at this distance, and with the perfidious Southerners in charge of cable services, to know how far Scotland stands in need of Constitutional reform. Scotland may be stiff with moss-troopers massed under the blue banners of the Covenant, but all we hear is the crash of broken glass in Sauchiehall Street. Of one thing only can one be certain, after reading Mr. Hamilton's narrative. Elephants (who never forget) still thrive and multiply north of the Border.

—J.M.

FORERUNNER

JOHANNES KEPLER: LIFE AND LETTERS, by Carole Baumgardt; *Victor Gollancz*. English price, 12/6.

KEPLER, who lived in the late 16th and early 17th Centuries, will be remembered always for his three astronomical laws. Some idea of what he did for astronomy, and of the size of the job he tackled, is given by Albert Einstein in an introduction to this book. Kepler's letters give a clear picture of his modest, gentle, good-humoured nature, and of his great courage and persistence. Some readers may think it strange that a man like him should believe in astrology—an indication, as Dr. Einstein says, that the inner enemy was not yet completely dead. The more remarkable thing, considering the un hospitable mental climate in which he worked, is that his mind was so free.

—F.A.J.

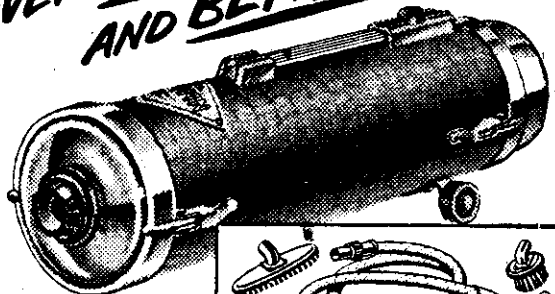
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE RELUCTANT HEALER, by William J. McMillan; *Gollancz*, English price 13/6. The autobiography of a man who suddenly and quite unexpectedly was shown that he had a powerful gift of healing.

THE GREATEST BOOK EVER WRITTEN, by Fulton Oursler; *The World's Work*, English price 25/-. The Old Testament stories retold in the hope of interesting readers in the original. There are 32 useful maps.

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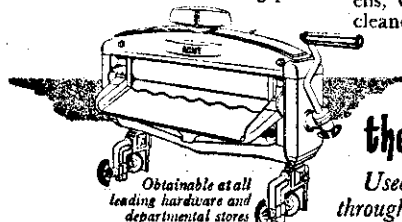
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